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20 September 1961

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN



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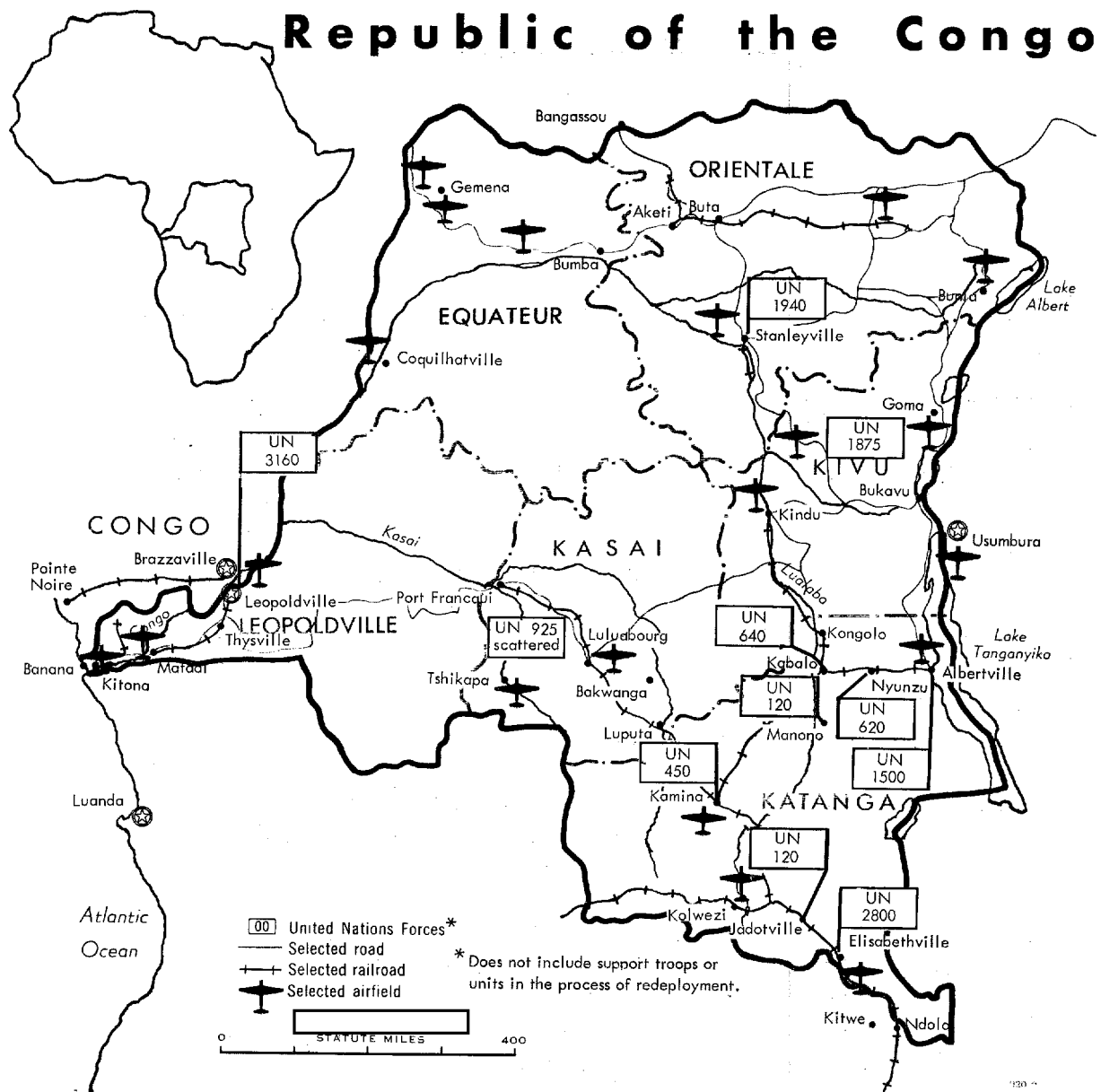
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Congo: The position of UN forces in Katanga appears increasingly serious. According to reports reaching UN headquarters in New York, 3,000 Katangan troops at Jadotville, up to now kept occupied by the Irish unit there, are being organized by Interior Minister Munongo for a move to Elisabethville, where UN forces are already extended. The planned airlift of UN reinforcements--one Indian and one or two Ethiopian battalions--has been halted by a combination of Katangan air activity and the inadequacy of night flying aids. The flight to Elisabethville of three Ethiopian F-86 jets, which the UN is counting on to end Katangan air superiority, has been held up pending UN assurances that adequate navigational aids are available. According to information received by the American Mission in New York, UN chief representative Linner told his headquarters that unless the airlift could be resumed, "We seriously risk the defeat of UN forces."

Mahmoud Khiari, the Tunisian chief of the UN's civil operations in the Congo has begun talks with Tshombé in Northern Rhodesia. Although Tshombé has indicated his willingness to negotiate with the UN, officials of the organization remain distrustful of his good faith--
--and of his ability to impose any truce on his followers. Moreover, Tshombé is currently negotiating from a position of strength and probably feels under no pressure to compromise.

*According to the American Embassy in Leopoldville, sentiment among Congolese legislators is virtually unanimous in favor of army intervention in Katanga. [Adoula told Ambassador Gullion on 18 September that he was aware of this sentiment and was hoping to head it off through a series of delaying tactics.] The Congolese senate has already passed a resolution favoring intervention.

(Backup, Page 1) (Map)

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Laos: [Ambassador Harriman reports that his talks with Souvanna Phouma in Rangoon were on the whole more satisfactory than expected. An important exception was Souvanna's balking at accepting several Vientiane moderates for his center group in a coalition government. Souvanna insisted on the]

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[necessity of drawing almost entirely from his Xieng Khouang followers for this group, but did agree to review this matter with his associates in Xieng Khouang. Although Souvanna seemed to be unduly confident of his strength and capabilities, he took a realistic stand on the importance "at all costs" of beating the Pathet Lao in a new general election. To this end, Souvanna said, he would select the most propitious time after demobilization of surplus forces on both sides, but noted that his newly organized political party would have its hands full with the well-organized Pathet Lao political arm, the Neo Lao Hak Sat, which he estimated to have a membership of up to 50,000. Souvanna asserted that, if the election were lost to the Pathet Lao, his only recourse would be to fight, as he and his followers were unwilling to see Laos become Communist.]

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South Vietnam: The Viet Cong's temporary capture on 18 September of a provincial capital about 40 miles north of Saigon is further evidence of increased Communist guerrilla aggressiveness in South Vietnam. The Viet Cong force, estimated at two battalions, or more than 1,000 men, occupied the town for several hours, killed the provincial chief, set many fires, and withdrew before government reinforcements arrived. Casualties among the defenders, reportedly a civil guard unit of less than 200 men, were apparently high. This action, like the attacks of 1 September by an equally large band in the mountainous northern region of the country, follows a pattern of hit-and-run strikes against South Vietnam's less-well-developed civil guard and self-defense forces, while avoiding large clashes with regular army units.

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Afghanistan-Pakistan: Neither Afghanistan nor Pakistan has shown any willingness to make concessions to help resolve the present impasse, but there has been no further deterioration in the situation during the past week. (Each country continues to strengthen its military position along the

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[redacted] border; the intent on both sides appears to be defensive. [redacted]

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Dominican Republic: Proponents of violent action are gaining the ascendancy in Dominican opposition groups, according to a 17 September report from the American consul general in Ciudad Trujillo. This trend has been accompanied by a decline in pro-US sentiment among literate Dominicans, the overwhelming majority of whom are aligned with the opposition. This group of Dominicans would probably assume an influential if not dominant role in any stable government that succeeds the present regime.

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[redacted] (Backup, Page 3)

*Greece: Greek Premier Karamanlis' decision to tender his resignation and recommend to the King that parliamentary elections be held on 29 October, rather than when the government's term of office expires in the spring of 1962, indicates confidence on his part that both the domestic and international situations favor him at this time. He had previously informed US officials that elections were probable this fall due, in part, to his desire to have a government in office with a firm mandate to deal with problems arising from the present East-West tension. Karamanlis has also recommended that the King appoint a nonpolitical caretaker government, under some figure acceptable to the opposition parties, to conduct the elections. The non-communist opposition parties had threatened to boycott elections not held under a caretaker government--a threat which, if implemented, would have cast doubt on the validity of any government victory and would have caused nearly complete polarization of politics between the Karamanlis party and the communist-front United Democratic Left.

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Situation in the Congo

Indian Brigadier I. J. Rikhye, who was Hammarskjold's military adviser and with Undersecretary Ralph Bunche seems to have assumed direction of the Congo operation, on 18 September gave American officials his analysis of the difficulties encountered by the UN forces in Katanga. According to Rikhye, the original UN plan had had the limited objective of closing down the Elisabethville radio station. This action triggered the return to their units of many of the European mercenaries who were in the process of repatriation, and fighting spread unexpectedly. Furthermore, the Katangan soldiers often were better armed than the UN troops, and the limited UN airlift capability has been unable to provide either support artillery or transport in adequate quantity. Rikhye stated that the Swedish and Irish troops were trained mainly in police functions and were ineffective in combat. [REDACTED]

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The Political Situation in the Dominican Republic

For some weeks it has been evident that the gulf between President Balaguer and the politically moderate opposition leaders has been steadily widening. Balaguer, though intellectually and emotionally attracted to the foremost opposition group, the National Civic Union (UCN), is nevertheless convinced that a successful and orderly transition toward more democratic government will necessarily have to be gradual. An increasingly vocal segment of the opposition, on the other hand, obsessed with ridding the country quickly of all vestiges of the Trujillo dictatorship and emboldened by the wide national solidarity the UCN and other opposition groups have engendered, is resorting more and more to intransigence and even provocation. Continuing police reprisals against the opposition and the provocations by the opposition itself are creating a vicious circle conducive to more and graver incidents and reducing the prospect for orderly transition. Many opposition members, convinced that Balaguer's liberalization program has already demonstrably failed, are considering more drastic action than they have yet attempted. The consul general notes that there has been more talk in the past week of assassination, sabotage, and terrorism than at any time since the assassination of the dictator last May. Although he has received no confirmation of any such plans, there is a danger that the political situation may soon enter a more violent phase.

The information available at the present time suggests that, though the opposition presently encompasses the bulk of literate Dominicans, it lacks the capability of seizing power from the entrenched military, which appears at present to be united. The immediate danger to the present regime is the possibility that the dominant element of the military, with or without the concurrence of General Ramfis Trujillo, will react to the present unsettled conditions by seizing full control of the government. The military apparently was on the verge of such action twice

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[REDACTED]

in the past month. A military coup would prolong and embitter the transition period and increase the likelihood of a concerted campaign of violence by the opposition.

Resentment of alleged US moral support for Balaguer's gradual approach to democratization has reduced the US standing among the opposition to the lowest point of any time in the past two years, in the opinion of the consul general. The consul general reports that some opposition members say that if the June 1959 invasion of the Dominican Republic, which was mounted by the Castro regime, were to occur now, "everyone would side with the invaders." [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

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